

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

_____ District of _____

United States of America

v.

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Case No.

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of _____ in the county of _____ in the
_____ District of _____, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Submitted by reliable electronic
means per Fed.R.Crim.P. 4.1, Blanca Sanchez-Gilbert
sworn to and signature attested
telephonically on February 1, 2021,
at Laredo, Texas.


DIANA SONG QUIROGA
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

AFFIDAVIT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Blanca Sanchez-Gilbert, having been duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

1. I am a Special Agent of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and currently assigned to the FBI Laredo Resident Agency's violent crimes / major offender squad.
2. On January 26, 2021, at approximately 8:00 pm Paula Perez' (Perez) son JL, a juvenile, was picked up by his friend MC, a juvenile, in a black sedan with paper license plates. At approximately midnight that night, Perez received a phone call from an unknown male person calling from a Mexican phone number stating that they had kidnapped JL because JL had stolen drugs from them, and they wanted \$30,000 for JL's release. A short while later, Perez got a short video clip on her cellular phone from JL's Facebook Messenger showing JL with cuts and bruises. The last contact made by the kidnappers was on the morning of January 27, 2021 at approximately 2:30am. It was at this time that Perez spoke with JL who communicated with her on an unknown cellular phone. He confirmed it was in fact him who was kidnapped. Perez was told that she had to come up with the money soon or JL would be killed.
3. On January 27, 2021 Perez reported this incident to the FBI. The FBI immediately opened an investigation and during the interview, Perez presented the Agents with photographs she had received on her Facebook Messenger showing JL face down, eyes closed, evident injuries to the back of his head. On the screen someone typed out "Ne es un juego" [this isn't a game]. The second image Perez showed agents was a screen shot reflecting a conversation she had with an unknown person who had communicated with Perez from her son's Facebook Messenger account. The message communicated to Perez was the following:

UP – “*Pendejos lo dejaron abandonado tabien pegaron con 5 moldes pero el ya mamo*” [Dumbass you left him abandoned and you also you took 5 bundles but he is fucked] Perez understood the message to mean that her son's life was threatened.
4. On January 28, 2021, Perez returned to the FBI office and continued negotiations with the extortionists, facilitated by FBI Negotiators. At approximately 5:00 p.m., Perez received a call from JL stating that he had escaped and was in Laredo, Texas.
5. FBI Agents and Laredo Police Department picked up JL from the 2300 block of Seymour Avenue, Laredo, Texas. JL described the location, an apartment, in which he was being held. JL described that the window in the back of the apartment in which he was being held, was open, and that was the window he used to escape. JL also described the subject was covered in tattoos, wearing a blue, white, and red striped short sleeve shirt, and an ankle monitor.
6. JL was then taken to the hospital to be treated for various injuries. JL confirmed an image of the apartment complex in the 1400 block of O'Kane Street, Laredo, TX (Subject Premises) as the place where he was held. JL was able to provide a detailed description of the inside of the apartment, the back of the apartment as well as the occupants.

7. FBI Agents reviewed video surveillance from a nearby apartment unit. The video surveillance showed that on January 26 and on January 28, a male fitting the description of one of the extortionists, was wearing a blue, white, and red striped short sleeve shirt, going in and out of Subject Premises.

8. Based on information provided by the victim, FBI Agents initiated surveillance on the Subject Premises. At approximately 7:00 p.m., on January 28, 2021, FBI Agents observed a male matching the description provided by JL attempting to key his way into Subject Premises. FBI Agents detained the male, later identified as Hector Jose Lopez (Lopez) and observed that Lopez had an ankle monitor.

9. Lopez was taken back to FBI for questioning, wherein Lopez admitted to receiving JL at the Subject Premises on January 26, 2021 from a woman known as "Nancy." Nancy brought JL with his hands bound, a hood over his head with duct tape over his eyes and told Lopez he needed to watch JL. From January 26th to January 28th, 2021 Lopez held JL in a bedroom closet and fed JL sandwiches and water and made JL urinate into water bottles. During a consensual search of Lopez' phone, a text message was sent to "Nancy," on July 28, 2021 asking Nancy to "bring duct tape."

10. Additionally, while being interviewed by the FBI, JL positively identified Lopez in a photo-array as the person who "took care of him," while JL was held at the Subject Residence.

s//Blanca Sanchez Gilbert//

Blanca Sanchez-Gilbert
Special Agent, FBI
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to me and subscribed to before me this _____ day of _____ 2021.

Diana Song Quiroga
United States Magistrate Judge